Bahrain Government receives 50% of the profits of the oil industry. 652
The Eastern Bank, since it was established in 1919, has served as the State's Treasury and a Budget is published every year showing the revenue and expenditure of the State.

The Customs Directorate is in the centre of the Manama sea front 651
and there are subsidiary offices in Muharraq Town, at the Airport 439
and at Sitra. All goods of any kind which are imported or exported 504
must pass through the customs. The Customs Pier at Manama, which was originally built in 1917, has frequently been lengthened and enlarged and now extends for a quarter of a mile out to sea. Owing to shallow water, vessels in the Manama harbour have to anchor some three miles from the shore and passengers and cargo are conveyed to and from the steamers by launches, barges and sailing dhows. The port and storage facilities in Bahrain are better than elsewhere in the Gulf and importers are allowed to retain their goods in the customs premises for ninety days before re-exporting them. There are usually about 90-100 sailing vessels and launches alongside and anchored off the pier, these come from other Gulf ports, from the west coast of India and from the Red Sea. Walking down the customs pier one sees many interesting types of vessels and sea-faring Arabs from all parts of the Gulf and beyond it.

On the west of the entrance to the Pier is the Passport Office. 486
Passport Officials go aboard all passenger vessels and are present at the Airport when aircraft arrive. Bahrain has had its own passports since 1929.

On the south side of the Square, which has a little garden in the 344
centre of it, is the "Bab al-Bahrain," the Gateway of Bahrain, consisting of two large blocks of office buildings with an archway in the centre. On the south side of the western block there is a fine old Arab door and on the balconies of the buildings as well as around the garden in the Square there are cement panels containing Arabesque patterns copied from old buildings in Bahrain.

The Bab al-Bahrain contains the finance and accounts department 344
where all payments to the Government for electricity, water, etc., etc., 655
are made, the Land Department which deals with sales and registration 423
of property and questions about boundaries and ownership of land, the registration of sales being compulsory, and several other government offices. His Highness has a reception room overlooking the 643
square on the first floor of the building where he sits on Wednesday mornings. Here he receives any visitors who wish to call on him and sees people who present petitions. On Monday mornings he visits the Municipal Buildings at Muharraq where he holds a similar reception.

East of the Customs, on the sea front, is the Law Courts Building 692
which contains a number of different courts including religious courts presided over by the Qadis of the Sunni and Shia sects. Certain foreigners, including British, Americans, Pakistanis and Indians are under the judicial authority of H.B.M.'s Political Agent. In mixed

1: Belgrave F-3 (no date) 1952 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

Part III.—AROUND BAHRAIN.

MANAMA

361 The capital of Bahrain, Manama, with a population, in 1950, of 39,648, is situated on the low lying coast at the north end of Bahrain Island. Most parts of the town are only two or three feet above sea level and close below the ground there is brackish water which accounts for the excessive humidity during the summer. The town extends for 1½ miles along the northern shore and about the same distance down the east coast. Although Manama, which means "The Place of Sleeping," is known to have existed in the 15th century and is mentioned by the Portuguese, it contains no ancient buildings, and possibly the oldest relic of the past is the tomb of Shaikh Ahmed al-Khalifah, who conquered Bahrain in 1782, situated near the Awal Cinema. [103]

The most attractive view of Manama is from the sea. Approaching the port from Saudi Arabia one sees a long line of tall, white houses with deep-shadowed verandahs, rising above the brilliantly coloured water. Around the Customs Pier, which extends for a quarter of a mile into the sea, there are usually 70 or 80 local sailing craft and launches whose crews and cargoes fill the pier to overflowing. The skyline of the town is broken by two or three minarets, the tallest being that of the Juma Mosque, while on the shore to the east of the town can be seen the graceful wind-towers which were used to catch the breeze before the days of electric fans and air-conditioning.

342 Most of the houses are built from coral stone, quarried from the bed of the sea at low tide, plastered and painted white. A noticeable feature of Bahrain architecture is the use of large flat sheets of coral stone set between masonry pillars in the walls of the houses. In some districts of the town there are still numbers of "barastis", huts made of palm branches, but these are rapidly being replaced by stone and cement houses.

361 The centre of the town is Shaikh Sulman Square with, on the north, the Pier and the Customs premises and on the south "Bab al-Bahrain," 344 the Gate of Bahrain, a large block of Government offices with an archway in the centre leading through to the principal street in the bazaar. In the centre of the Square is a circular garden, the walls of which are made from cement panels decorated with traditional Bahraini designs, arabesques, of pleasing appearance. The bazaar extends for some 366 443 distance on each side of Barrett Road, the main street. To its west are the Municipal Buildings and an open market where, on Wednesday mornings, the people of the villages bring their produce to sell.

The Manama bazaar rightly claims to be the emporium of the Gulf, it contains both narrow streets of picturesque little shops, full

Sheikh Sulman Square and the Bab al-Bahrain. Photo : K. P. Narayan.

Bahrain Government Students' Hostel. Photo : Sir Charles Belgrave.

The Suq al-Khamis Market with the Mosque in the background. Photo : The Author.

J. Belgrave F-3 (80 date) 1953 MEC Bahrain MEC

4413
3rd

which opens at 11 a.m. and at midnight, for an hour, to allow the passage of vessels through the deep channel between the two islands. There is a toll gate at the bridge and cars coming from Muharraq to Manama are charged 4 annas. Beyond the bridge, around a group of white buildings, the Customs House, Police Station and Municipal Office, there is always a scene of much activity. Here boats unload their cargoes and buses fill with passengers bound for all parts of the Islands. The sea road continues along the water front until it turns inland towards the airport. Much of the ground inside the sea road has not yet been reclaimed and at high tide the sea forms little squares of still water where children sail home-made boats. On Muharraq sea front there are several important buildings, a government dispensary, a large school and, at the northern corner, a block of flats.

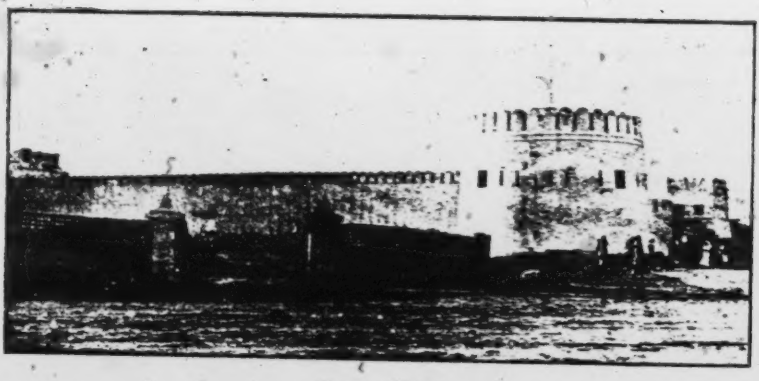
Another road, opposite the causeway, runs up into the town passing through the bazaars, which branch off to the north and south. The Muharraq shops are of the old fashioned type, with neither plate glass nor fixed prices. There are antique dealers and carpet sellers and all the usual traders found in Arab towns. Ships chandlers are numerous as Muharraq has always been a sea faring centre. Arab chests, carved of brass bound, carpets, worked leather sandals, divers' equipment and goods of interest to tourists can be bought here at prices lower after judicious bargaining, than those in Manama.

Today Muharraq is still a typically Arab town, a fact of which its inhabitants are proud. Most of the shops are owned by Arabs and are not occupied by Indians or Persians as in Manama. The town, although it was once the capital of Bahrain, the centre of the pearl industry and the focus of trade (a fact that its inhabitants remember with pride) has developed more slowly than Manama. There are few modern buildings, only one cinema and no large European style shops, but its climate is said to be pleasanter than Manama and it is not so humid in the summer. Muharraq was once a walled town but no traces of the walls now remain. The high old houses which line the narrow streets have changed little during the last century, except where corners have been cut away to make passages for large American cars. Many of the larger houses belong to the Ruling Family. They are built around courtyards and in some cases a big house contains three or four such courtyards, surrounded by high walls with few outward-looking windows in them to screen the house from prying eyes.

Muharraq has a telephone service, electric light, a Post Office and a filling station, but no main water supply, apart from artesian wells. As in the case of Manama, the affairs of the town are controlled by an elected Municipal Council presided over by a member of the Ruling Family.

The sea surrounds the town on three sides but at the northern end a new residential area is developing on land which is being sold by the Municipality for building purposes. East of the town is the bay of Arad, the ancient name for Muharraq at the time of Alexander,

344



Tower of Fort

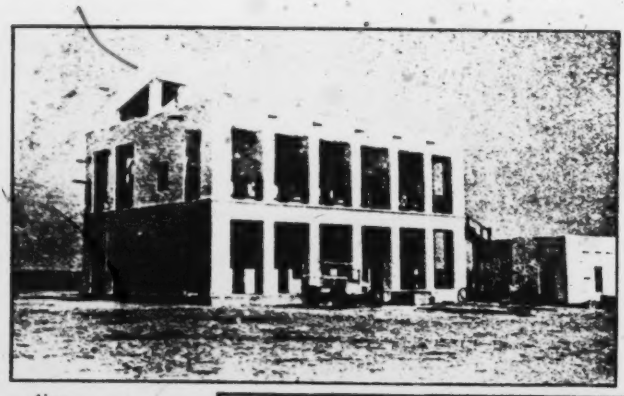
Prison Yard

[facing p 12]

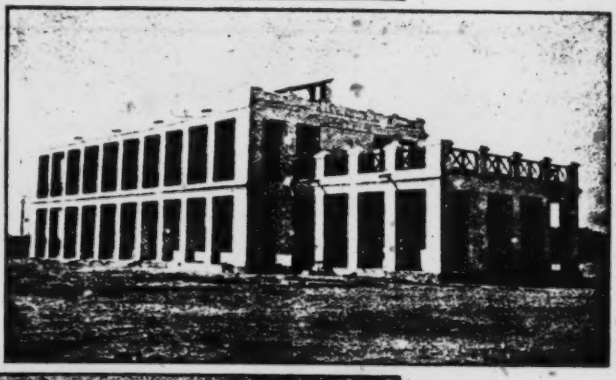
5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

• 344

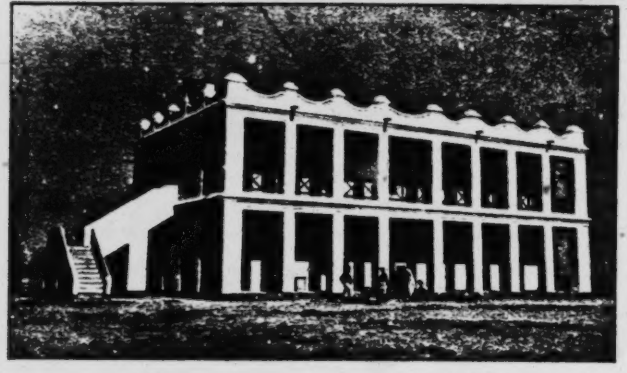
BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED BY BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT AT NAVAL BASE, JUFAIR



Above
Clerk in Charge's House



Right
Canteen



Left
Officer's Building

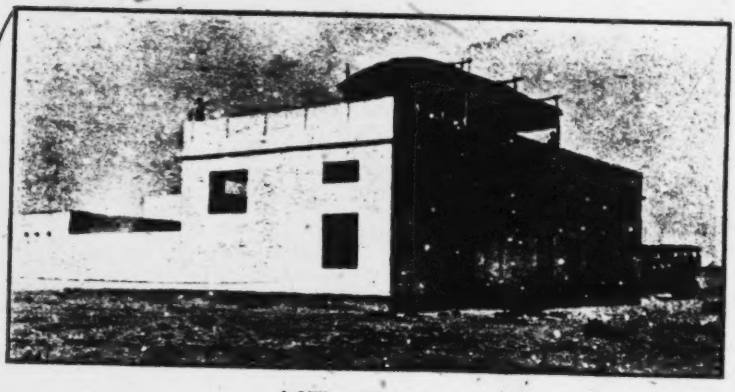
[facing P. 22 A]

5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

346

Sooq Al Khamis Mosque

344

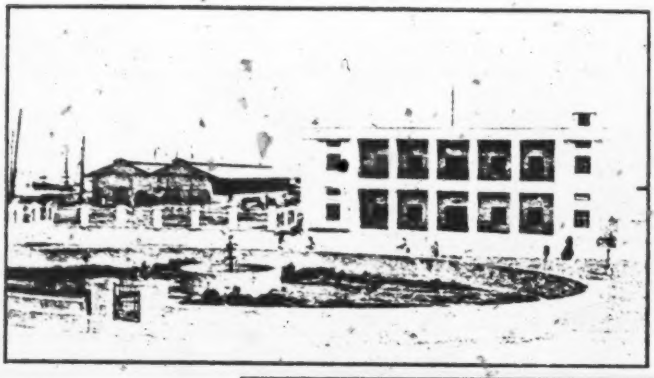


A Village Dispensary

[Facing p. 22B]

5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

9 344



New Customs House and Round-about

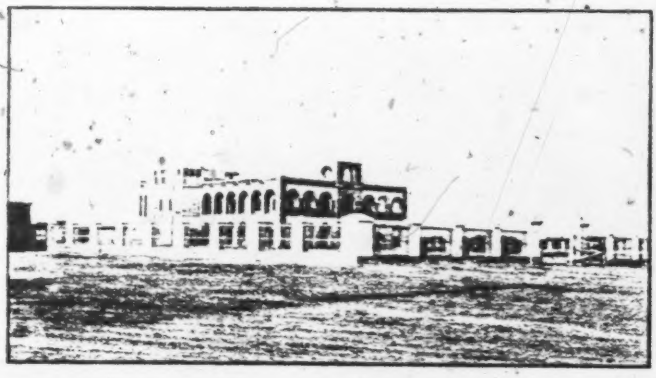
Government Shops

Women's Dispensary

[facing p. 24A]

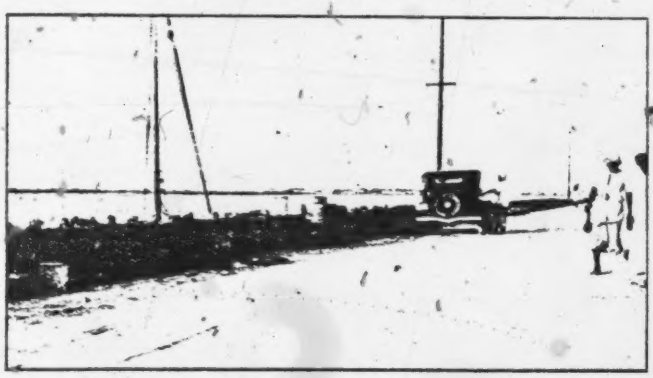
5: Bahrain G-5 (1926-1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

344

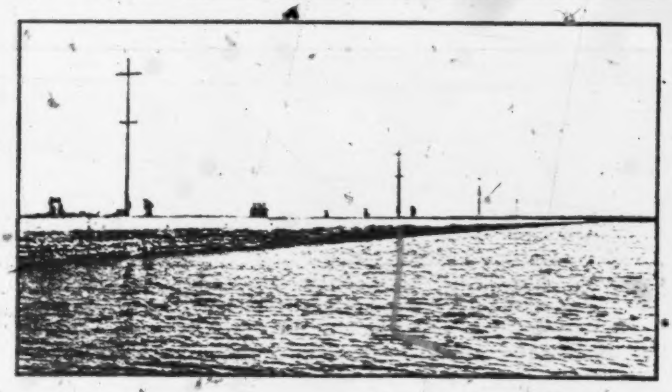


The Palace
Manamah.

491



Manamah
Muharraq
Sea Road



The Road
(From the Sea)

[facing p. 24B]